

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-4. **(Cancel)**.

5. **(New)** A method for the operation of a multi-cylinder internal combustion engine with intake and exhaust valves and at least one braking valve for each cylinder, said braking valves being connected to a common pressure vessel (braking rail), wherein during a start-up phase of said internal combustion engine a first group of cylinders is cut off from fuel supply such that said cylinders of said first group operate as compressors charging said pressure vessel via said braking valves with compressed air, and wherein a second group of cylinders supplied with fuel is charged with compressed air from said pressure vessel via said braking valves, thus raising compression pressure and compression temperature in said cylinders of said second group during said start-up phase.

6. **(New)** A method according to claim 5, wherein for said cylinders of said first group said braking valves are opened in a range of 540° to 720° crank angle to charge said pressure vessel with air, and wherein for said cylinders of said second group said braking valves are opened in a range of 480° to 630° crank angle to feed compressed charge air from said pressure vessel.

7. **(New)** A method according to claim 5, wherein for said cylinders of said first group said braking valves are opened in a range of 570° to 690° crank angle to charge said pressure vessel with air, and wherein for said cylinders of said second group said braking valves are

opened in a range of 510° to 610° crank angle to feed compressed charge air from said pressure vessel.

8. **(New)** A method according to claim 5, wherein a multi-cylinder internal combustion engine is operated from start-up until idling speed is attained by said cylinders of said second group exclusively.

9. **(New)** A method according to claim 5, wherein a multi-cylinder internal combustion engine is operated during a short warm-up phase by said cylinders of said second group exclusively.